

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 04512 191536Z

64

ACTION MMO-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-06 L-03 NASA-01 SS-15 SP-02

PER-01 ABF-01 CPR-01 OPR-02 /047 W

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R 191449Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8787

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA, AODE, NL

SUBJ: MODE- NASA REQUEST TO ASSIGN ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL TO
ESTEC SPACELAB PROJECT

REF: THE HAGUE 4426

1. AS RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS WITH HAMON (NASA) EMBASSY LEARNED THAT QUESTION OF STATUS FOR NASA PERSONNEL DETAILED TO ESTEC HAS NOT BEEN RESOLVED. ESA HAS SO FAR DONE NOTHING. ACCORDING TO HAMON, PRESENT PLANS CALL FOR INCREASING NASAS EMPLOYEES DETAILED TO ESTEC FROM SIX (COPPS HAVING ALREADY ARRIVED) TO 18. APPARENTLY FOUR EMPLOYEES WILL COME ON A TDY BASIS FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR AND EIGHT OTHERS ON ONE TO TWO YEAR ASSIGNMENTS.

2. PRESUMABLY, SINCE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES CANNOT BE OBTAINED FOR SUCH NASA PERSONNEL THROUGH THE EMBASSY (THE HAGUE 993), ESA SHOULD SEEK TO OBTAIN THE SAME STATUS FOR THEM AS THAT GRANTED TO ESA PERSONNEL FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS STATUS PROVIDES ONLY FOR DUTYFREE IMPORTATION OF CARS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS AND EXEMPTION FROM DUTHC INCOME TAX. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ESA HAS AGREED TO REIMBURSE NASA FOR ALLOWANCES AND TRAVEL COSTS FOR NASA PERSONNEL AND IF STATUS CANNOT BE OBTAINED, ALSO TO REIMBURSE NASA EMPLOYEES UP TO 10,000 FRENCH FRANCS AS A TAX REBATE ON PERSONAL CARS.

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PAGE 02 THE HA 04512 191536Z

3. HAMON STATES THAT DEPARTMENT INFORMED NASA, AND THAT NASA IN

TURN IS INFORMING EMPLOYEES DETAILED TO ESTEC THAT THEY CANNOT RECEIVE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES THROUGH THE EMBASSY. AT SAME TIME, APPARENTLY NASA PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT EMBASSY WILL ARRANGE APO AND COMMISSARY PRIVILEGES FOR THEM AND THAT ESA WILL COVER TAX REIMBURSEMENT ON THEIR PERSONAL VEHICLES.

4. ALTHOUGH NASA PERSONNEL ALREADY HERE NOW ENJOY APO AND COMMISSARY PRIVILEGES, THIS STRETCHES LEGAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN DUTCH AND US. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT DIPLOMATIC STATUS OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL ENTITLED THEM TO COMMISSARY AND APO PRIVILEGES. SINCE NASA EMPLOYEES DETAILED TO ESTEC DO NOT HAVE SUCH STATUS, IF THEIR USE OF COMMISSARY AND APO SHOULD COME TO OFFICIAL DUTCH ATTENTION, GON COULD LEGITIMATELY CHALLENGE THEIR ACCESS. CONSEQUENTLY WE URGE CAUTION IN MAKING ANY COMMITMENT IN THIS REGARD, ALTHOUGH WE HOPE NO PROBLEM WILL ARISE WITH DUTCH. INCIDENTALLY, WE UNDERSTAND FROM HAMON THAT WITHOUT APO AND COMMISSARY PRIVILEGES, NASA WOULD FIND IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO RECRUIT PERSONNEL FOR ESTEC.

5. UNDER ABOVE CIRCUMSTANCES, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT NASA ACTIVELY SEEK TO ARRANGE THAT ITS PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO ESTEC BE GIVEN SAME STATUS AS OTHER ESA EMPLOYEES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ASSIGNMENT OF THESE ADDITIONAL NASA EXPERTS IS AT INITIATIVE OF ESA AND IS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS OF EUROPEAN PROJECT; CONSEQUENTLY, ESA SHOULD BE ABLE TO TREAT NEW NASA PERSONNEL LIKE NATIONALS OF OTHER STATES ASSIGNED TO ESTEC, SOMETHING IT DECLINED TO DO FOR PREVIOUS NASA EMPLOYEES.

6. IN ANY CASE, AS ALREADY REPORTED, EMBASSY WILL PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, WITH SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES PAID THROUGH RFC PARIS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPACE PROGRAMS, PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976THEHA04512
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760318-1054
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760836/aaaabfiz.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION MMO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 THE HAGUE 4426
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <27 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MODE- NASA REQUEST TO ASSIGN ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL TO ESTEC SPACELAB PROJECT
TAGS: TSPA, AODE, NL, US, NASA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006